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GENERAL NOTES.

At the meeting of the Astronomical and Astrophysical Society of America held at Put-in-Bay during the latter part of August the following officers were elected for the ensuing year:—

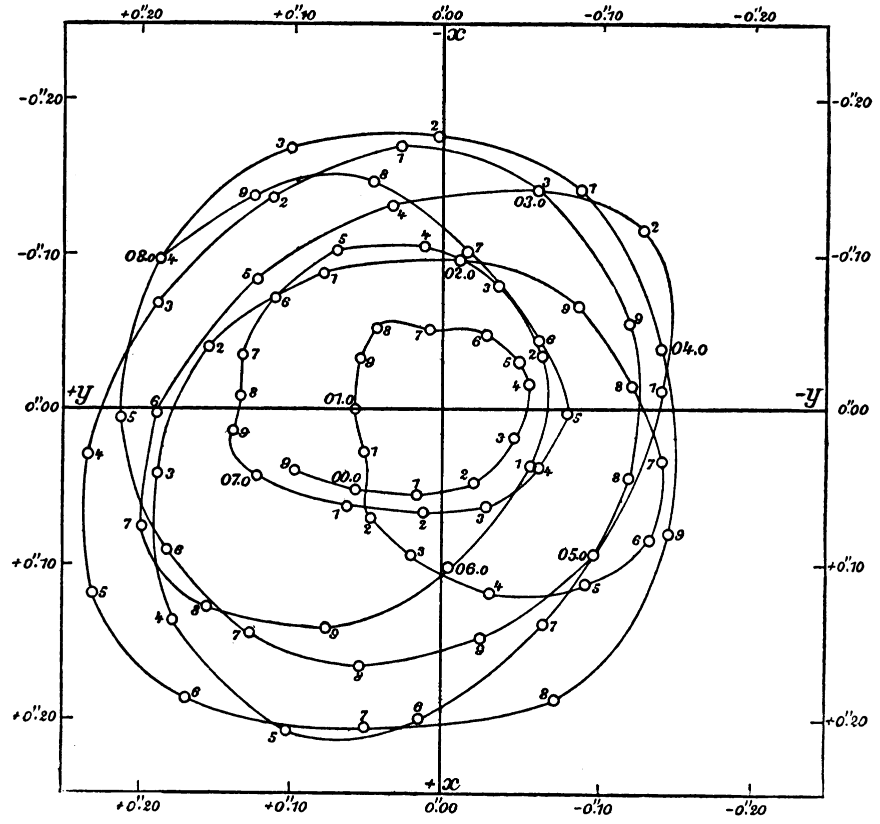
President—E. C. Pickering.
First Vice-President—G. C. Comstock.
Second Vice-President—W. W. Campbell.
Secretary—W. J. Hussey.
Treasurer—C. L. Doolittle.
Councilors—Ormond Stone, W. S. Eichelberger, Frank Schlesinger, W. J. Humphreys.

The Variation of Latitude.—Provisional results of the International Latitude Service during 1907, from observations at the north parallel 39° 8′, are published by Professor Albrecht in *Astronomische Nachrichten,* No. 4253. As in his provisional results of previous years, Professor Albrecht has employed the observations, by the six stations, of only those sixty-six pairs which have been observed since the start in 1899. (The other thirty of the ninety-six programme pairs were changed at the beginning of 1906.) The same mean places of the stars have been used as in the earlier papers. The deduced path of the pole during the year is traced in the figure here reproduced (from the *Nachrichten*), which shows the path from 1899.9 to 1908.0.

It appears from the eight years' results that the z-term, the term that is independent of the longitude, varies in a simple sine-curve of one-year period. The average of the eight annual z-curves is almost precisely the sine-curve:

$$z = -0''.002 + 0''.046 \sin (t\,360^\circ + 111^\circ.6),$$

in which the time, t, is expressed as a fraction of the year. By this formula, z is zero about ten days before the equinoxes, and reaches its maximum values, $-0''.048$ and $+0''.044$,



about ten days before the summer and winter solstices, respectively. The meteorological explanation of the term seems plausible, therefore, though it is not at all evident why its zero and maximum values should precede, instead of lagging somewhat behind, the equinoxes and solstices. In a later note in the same number, Professor ALBRECHT announces the very interesting and important facts, gleaned from the uncompleted reduction of data obtained at the two new stations at south latitude 31° 55′, that *z* has the *same sign* at the south parallel as at the north, and seems to have the same magnitude. These facts are seen to add weight to the meteorological hypothesis, as we consider the reversal of seasons in the northern and southern hemispheres.

the Paris Observatory; C. L. W. Charlier, director of the

The co-efficients x and y of the longitude terms were also found to be the same in the southern as in the northern hemisphere, so far as could be ascertained at the time of the second note.
J. D. M.

Science for September 18th contains an article entitled, "Doctorates Conferred by American Universities." A list of all the doctor's degrees in science conferred in 1908 is given, and, in addition, some statistical studies covering the preceding ten years. But one doctorate in astronomy was given in 1908, and that by Vanderbilt University to James Harrison Scarborough, whose thesis was entitled, "The Computation of the Orbit of a Planet."

Algol variables appear to be composed of bodies of small density. Dr. Ristenpart has deduced (*Astronomische Nachrichten,* No. 4250) the densities of ten of them from the elements of their orbits, and finds that they range from one fiftieth to one third that of our Sun, the densest being those of shortest period.—*Observatory.*

Notes from "Science."—Professor George E. Hale, director of the Solar Observatory of the Carnegie Institution, has been elected a foreign correspondent of the Paris Academy of Sciences in the place of the late Asaph Hall.

Dr. F. Ristenpart, of Berlin, has been appointed director of the Observatory of Santiago de Chile, as successor to Dr. A. Obrecht.

Sir George Howard Darwin, professor of astronomy at Cambridge, has been elected a corresponding member of the Berlin Academy of Sciences.

The Royal Astronomical Society, London, has elected corresponding members as follows: Dr. E. B. Frost, director of the Yerkes Observatory; J. G. Hagen, S. J., director of the Vatican Observatory; M. Benjamin Baillaud, director of

Observatory at Lund; and JOHANNES FRANZ HARTMANN, of the Astrophysical Observatory at Potsdam.

Professor HUGO VON SEELIGER, of Munich, has declined a call to the directorship of the Astrophysical Observatory at Potsdam.

The Earl of Rosse.—The EARL of ROSSE, a member of the Astronomical Society of the Pacific since 1891, died on the 29th of August last. He was much interested in scientific work and was a regular attendant at scientific meetings. He was twice elected a vice-president of the Royal Society, of which, as well as of the Royal Astronomical Society, he had been a Fellow since 1867. He was one of the senior members of the Board of Visitors of the Greenwich Observatory. His latest contribution to astronomy was an attempt to discover whether the rocks composing the surface of the Moon continued to radiate heat after the Sun's light was cut off during a lunar eclipse. The results of this investigation were submitted to the British Association in South Africa, but further experiments are necessary to obtain a definite conclusion. The father of the late Earl was the distinguished astronomer and sometime president of the Royal Society, who built the great reflecting telescope at Birr, Ireland, by means of which many discoveries of importance were made.